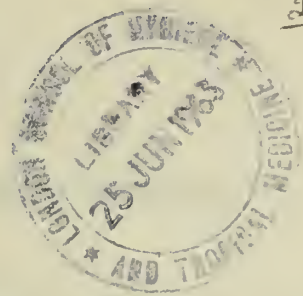


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HARPENDEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT
of the
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

James C. Sleight
M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

and

SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

John Snowdon
M.A.P.H.I.

FOR THE YEAR 1960.



HARPENDEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

1960

Chairman : Mr. E. Ackroyd, J.P.

Vice-Chairman : Mr. C.F. Putterill, C.A.

Mr. K.H. Bond.	Mr. E.G. Hill.
Mr. A. Clark.	Mr. N.J. Hill.
Mr. C.W. Curl.	Mr. H.A.F. Malden.
Mrs. E.D. Eastwood.	Mrs. V.E. Truss.
Mr. L.W. Edgell.	Mrs. C. West.
Mr. L.T. Fowler.	Mr. H.C. Williamson, J.P.
Mr. F.N. Gingell, M.B.E., J.P., C.A.	

Public Health Committee

Chairman : Mr. K.H. Bond.

Mr. A. Clark.	Mr. E.G. Hill.
Mrs. E.D. Eastwood.	Mr. N.J. Hill.
Mr. L.T. Fowler.	Mr. H.C. Williamson, J.P.
Mr. F.N. Gingell, M.B.E., J.P., C.A.	

To the Chairman and Councillors of the
Harpenden Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my report on the health of Harpenden for the year 1960. As this will be the last opportunity I shall have of presenting, at any rate, a full report, I have added some comments, under the various headings, in regard to 1961 up to the 1st August.

I have now been a Medical Officer of Health for 30 years, in various parts of the country, and I feel very definitely that the time has come for a review of the Services provided under the Health Authority both at Government level and Local Government level. Some Services were started, and started for very good reasons, but these reasons have to a large extent disappeared and I would suggest that the time has come for a very careful re-appraisal of what Services are necessary and also what new Services should be provided. There is not an unlimited amount of money, or personnel, available for the Health Service and it would appear to be essential that this limited money and personnel should be used to the best advantage.

In considering this question I would suggest that the Council should consider - "would you provide such and such a Service, which is in existence now, if it was not in existence?" That is, is this particular Service essential? It is often very much easier to start a Service than to stop it: to stop any Service will certainly be opposed by at least some interested parties, but the Services cannot increase indefinitely without some pruning of redundancy, according to the change of circumstances which has occurred during the last 30 years.

The general health of the district remained good and was remarkably free from epidemic disease. No case of poliomyelitis occurred but in the early part of 1961 a very heavy, but mild, epidemic of measles took place, as was expected on the two year cycle.

I must extend my grateful thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Council for the help and co-operation which has been afforded to me in my 13 years as Medical Officer of Health of your district. I am also deeply indebted to the Chief Clerk and Secretary in the Divisional Health Office for their assistance in the preparation of the statistics for this report and for the many extra duties carried out by them during the year which were actually outside their Divisional Health Office duties.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

J.C. SLEIGH,

Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	..	..	..	..	3,157
Registrar General's estimate of resident population	..				17,360
Census April, 1961.	..	..	..	..	18,218
Number of inhabited houses on the Rate Books:					
Inhabited dwelling-houses (including flats and huts but excluding caravans)	..		..	..	5,790
Shops with living accommodation	..		..	..	66
Licensed premises with living accommodation.	..		..	..	24
Rateable Value	..	..	..	..	£317,401
Sum represented by a penny rate (estimated)	..		..	..	£1,295
<u>Extracts from Vital Statistics.</u>		<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Live Births - Legitimate	..	167	187	354	
Illegitimate	..	4	2	6	
Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population	..	..	..	20.74	
Still Births	..	2	5	7	
Still Birth Rate (i.e. per 1,000 total live and still births) ..	..	..	..	19.07	
Still Birth Rate (i.e. per 1,000 of estimated population)	..	..	..	0.40	
Deaths	..	95	77	172	
Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population	9.91	

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		<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Deaths from pregnancy, Childbirth, or Abortion:		-	-	-
Rate per 1,000 (total live and stillbirths)		-
Deaths of Infants under 1 Year:				
Legitimate	..	5	3	8
Illegitimate	..	1	1	2
Death Rate of Infants under 1 year of age (all infants per 1,000 live births):..		..	..	27.78
Neonatal Death Rate:	..	..	..	19.44

BIRTHS: The number of births during
1960 was 360.

DEATHS: There were 172 deaths.

It may be of interest to compare the average age of death in 1953 and 1960. In Harpenden this was: for 1953 - Males 69.05, Females 68.10; whilst in 1960 the average age was 64.66 for males and 71.21 for females. The total numbers were rather small and it is very doubtful if one can draw any valid conclusions from these figures but it may be of interest to compare them with those for the Division as a whole, excluding Elstree, which were: 1953 - Males 63.95, Females 69.39; 1960 - Males 65.08, Females 71.14. Whether life is becoming more strenuous in the intervening years for the males of Harpenden, as compared with the ladies, I leave to your imagination.

The Infant Mortality rate has risen quite a lot this year but this, to my mind, is not significant as it is based on very small numbers and, as I have said in previous reports, this rate is bound to fluctuate very markedly in dealing with such low numbers. The actual causes of death were:- Home Accidents - 1 at four months: Premature Birth - 5, aged one day (2), three days, two days, five hours: Congenital Defects - 4 - aged ten hours, four hours, one month and seven months.

CAUSES OF DEATH

<u>Cause.</u>			<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory	..	1	-
2.	Tuberculosis, other	..	-	-
3.	Syphilitic Diseases	..	-	-
4.	Diphtheria	..	-	-
5.	Whooping Cough	..	-	-
6.	Meningococcal infections	..	-	-
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	..	-	-
8.	Measles	..	-	-
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases	..	-	-
10.	Malignant Neoplasm, stomach	..	2	-
11.	Malignant Neoplasm, lung, bronchus	..	9	1
12.	Malignant Neoplasm, breast	..	-	6
13.	Malignant Neoplasm, uterus	..	-	-
14.	Other lymphatic and malignant Neoplasms	..	7	6
15.	Leukaemia, aleukaemia	..	-	-
16.	Diabetes	..	-	2
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system	..	16	14
18.	Coronary disease, angina	..	13	9
19.	Hypertension	..	3	2
20.	Other heart disease	..	14	14
21.	Other circulatory diseases	..	3	6
22.	Influenza	..	-	-
23.	Pneumonia	..	2	2
24.	Bronchitis	..	8	2
25.	Other diseases of respiratory system	..	-	1
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	..	2	-
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	..	-	-
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	..	-	1
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	..	1	-
C/fwd ..			81	66

31 Cancer.

85 Heart Disease.

<u>Cause.</u>		<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>
	B/fwd	81	66
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	..	-	-
31. Congenital malformations	..	-	1
32. Other defined and ill- defined diseases	..	10	7
33. Motor vehicle accidents	..	3	-
34. All other accidents	..	1	2
35. Suicide	..	-	1
36. Homicide and operations of war	..	-	-
		<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
	<u>Totals</u>	95	77
		<u>==</u>	<u>==</u>

Cancer Death Rate (per 1,000 of estimated population) - 1.79

Heart Disease

Death Rate (per 1,000 of estimated population) - 3.17

It can safely be said that the majority of cases under the heading "Heart Disease" could be more accurately described as death from old age.

There has been considerable agitation for further propaganda and education in regard to Cancer, especially trying to get people to come early. Unfortunately we are not yet in a position to say that even the earliest case of Cancer can be cured and personally I am not keen on propaganda which is not entirely truthful. If we could say that if you will come up early we will cure you, I should be all in favour of carrying out this propaganda, but unfortunately this is not the case.

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SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

Welfare Centres and Clinics.

The County Council Child Welfare Clinics are held at No. 40 Luton Road, every Wednesday afternoon, the Doctor being in attendance on the first and third Wednesday afternoon of each month and at Batford (J. M. I.) School, on the second and fourth Wednesday afternoons. An Infant Welfare Clinic is also held at the Methodist Church Hall, Southdown Road, on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month.

The Ophthalmic, Dental and Speech Therapy clinics are at 40 Luton Road by appointment.

This arrangement is working very well. At Batford we are deeply indebted to the Headmaster, Mr. G. Rees, for his enthusiastic co-operation.

National Health Service Act.

The Divisional Administration of the Health services administered by the Local Health Authority, the County Council, continues to work very smoothly and an increasing amount of detailed administration is being passed out to Divisional Health Offices from Hertford.

The records available in the Divisional Health Office on Local Health Authority work are of the greatest value to me in my local Sanitary Authority (Medical Officer of Health) work, especially in what is my most difficult job, assessing medical points for housing applications.

Ambulance Service:

I am omitting figures for the ambulance service as applied to Harpenden. The service is running at full strength and whether a case is served from Harpenden or St. Albans depends on circumstances such as urgency, availability of ambulances or sitting cars.

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Hospitals.

The Harpenden Memorial Hospital forms part of the Luton and Hitchin Group administered by the Management Committee under the North-West Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board. Four House Committees have been appointed by the Management Committee, one of which is concerned with this Hospital and for this purpose the Hospital is linked with Welwyn and Stevenage.

The treatment of maternity cases in hospital is causing very considerable worry. Ideally confinement is not a disease and should be dealt with in the patient's home. In the old days, before the invention of penicillin, there was undoubtedly considerably increased risk of puerperal fever in hospitals, then, with the invention of penicillin, this practically ceased. Unfortunately Nature has a habit of hitting back. Penicillin and the other anti-biotics do hit most of the germs which cause puerperal fever but unfortunately it does not hit them all, and, with the marked use of anti-biotics in hospitals, the remaining comparatively few germs have increased very markedly and these are unaffected by anti-biotics. We have now come to the stage when infection in hospital is causing us very serious worry and, though not nearly so bad as it was before the penicillin era, there can be no reasonable doubt that where the home conditions are good and there are no medical reasons for hospital delivery, it is much better for the patient to have her baby at home.

Statistics.

Year ended, 31st December, 1960.

<u>Bed complement:</u>	Surgical and Medical	..	22	
	Maternity	..	<u>12</u>	34
<u>Average daily number of occupied beds:</u>		..		21.46
<u>Admissions:</u>	..	..	..	715
<u>Discharges:</u>	..	..	..	714
<u>Number of Births:</u>	Live	..	..	343
	Still	..	..	3
	Deaths	..	..	4

<u>Physiotherapy Dept:</u>	<u>New Patients.</u>	<u>Attendances.</u>
In-patients	28	388
Out-patients	644	7,248
<u>Casualty Dept:</u>	789	900
<u>Specialist Consultations:</u>	900	1,168
<u>Out-patients treated by General Practitioners:</u>	121	141

General Nutrition,

Poor nutrition is rare and usually is the result of fussing parents indulging food fads. Underweight children often are of small birth weight or have small parents.

I must emphasise that there is no fixed weight for age. Both weight and height vary within rather wide limits in completely healthy children.

Nursing in the Home.

The District Nursing Sisters are available for all cases of domiciliary nursing which includes Midwifery and General Nursing and in all cases where there is illness in the home where a request is made personally or at the request of the Doctor in attendance.

Home Help Service.

This service is administered by the Hertfordshire County Council and provides domestic help for households where such help is required owing to the presence of any person who is ill, lying-in, an expectant mother, mentally defective, aged, or a child not over school age, within the meaning of the Education Act, 1944.

The Organiser, who is a member of the Divisional Health Department Staff, receives requests from doctors, health visitors, midwives, and hospital almoners. No one is denied help on financial grounds and every case can be assessed according to the family income.

The service is proving extremely popular, so much so, in fact, that we are unable to provide all the help that is needed because we cannot get sufficient numbers of Home Helps. This is particularly difficult in the period Christmas to Easter when of

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course, illness is at its height and one must remember that illness affects Home Helps as well as other members of the community.

Health Visiting.

There are two Health Visitors in the area. They are employed for the visiting of persons in their homes for the purpose of giving advice as to the care of young children, old persons suffering from illness, and expectant or nursing mothers, and as to the measures necessary to prevent the spread of infection.

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SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply.

The water supply for the whole area was until the 1st October, 1960, supplied by a private undertaking, the Harpenden Water Company. On that date they were absorbed by the Colne Valley Water Company, whose headquarters are at Watford but the local office and pumping stations have been retained under the control of an Area Engineer.

The supply of water which has been satisfactory both in quality and quantity is obtained from two boreholes, one in Shakespeare Road and one at East Hyde, which is just outside the District. The raw supply at both boreholes is chlorinated as a precautionary measure and very few complaints are now received as to taste or contamination.

Samples taken during the year were as follows :-

	<u>By Water Company.</u>	<u>By Local Authority.</u>
Chemical - raw water	11	-
Bacteriological - raw water	18	-
Bacteriological - main supply	11	3

Results in all cases were satisfactory and the amount of residual chlorine varied between .02 and .07. The degree of hardness is in the region of 25 and is such that no difficulties arise from plumbo-solvent action.

As far as is known every house in the district is supplied with water from the main supply and the number of standpipes still in use is very small indeed. The number of inhabited dwellings on the 31st December, 1960 was 5,890 and the estimated population was 18,000.

Sewerage:

The Majority of properties in the district enjoy main drainage facilities and the sewage is treated at one main sewage works under the control of the Council's Surveyor.

Despite the rapid growth of the district in post war years the sewage works by appropriate expansion have been able to cope adequately with the increased load and the effluent which is discharged into the river Lea has continued to be found satisfactory.

The total quantity of sewage treated at the Sewage Works was 255,436,000 gallons compared with 245,825,800 gallons in 1959.

There are 58 cesspools in use but it is hoped to reduce this number in the near future by extending the sewer at two points. The remaining cesspools serve scattered small groups or single properties and although it may be possible to connect some of these properties to main drainage in due course, the majority will remain out of reach of public sewers for some time.

Public Swimming Bath.

In May, 1960, the first public swimming bath in the district was opened. It is sited in the open air in Rothamsted Park and consists of the main pool which is 50' x 100' with a depth varying from 3' to 9' and a childrens pool 50' x 30' the depth of which is 1' to 2'.

The water from the pools, the total capacity of which is 210,000 gallons, is obtained from the main supply and is treated by pressure sand filters followed by break-point chlorination with the requisite chemical dosing to maintain pH at the correct level. The water is circulated through the pool and treatment plant whereby a complete turnover occurs every six hours whilst the pool is open and is continued through the night during the peak season.

Twice daily tests to ascertain the pH, free, residual and combined chlorine were carried out at the pool and in addition 19 bacteriological samples and 8 samples for pH and free chlorine determination were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory with the following results:-

<u>Plate Count.</u>	<u>Coliform bacilli</u> <u>per 100 m.l.</u>		
7	0		
13	0		
0	0		
0	0		
6	0		
0	0		
1	0		
2	0		
2	0		
5	0		
1	0	<u>pH.</u>	<u>Free Chlorine p.p.m.</u>
2	0	7.4	.1
0	0	7.4	.1
0	0	7.0	.15
2	0	7.0	.1
0	0	5.0	.1
0	0	5.0	.1
0	0	7.5	.4
0	0	7.4	.1

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SECTION D.

HOUSING.

Re-housing:

This problem has eased considerably but it must be borne in mind that houses will always deteriorate and therefore there will always be slums to be dealt with. Also the standard of fitness for human habitation will gradually rise. The points scheme is in use and in addition all certificates from medical practitioners requesting priority for any of their patients are submitted to me as Medical Officer of Health. I have the power to recommend additional points on medical grounds without disclosing my reasons for doing so. In extreme cases I also have the power of recommending absolute priority but this power I am very unwilling to use as, of course, if this power were abused it would ruin the whole points scheme with which I am completely in favour.

The duty thus imposed on me is a very difficult one and I have no doubt that on occasions I shall make mistakes but I can assure the Council that I shall do my utmost to make their housing scheme work as fairly as humanly possible, bearing in mind the very large and urgent demand for houses.

Points are allotted independently of me for such such conditions as overcrowding. I therefore never give points for conditions which already attract points under the Housing Points Scheme.

Number of new houses and flats erected during the year:

(a)	By the Local Authority	..	20
(b)	By private enterprise	..	70
			<hr/>
			90
			<hr/>
			<hr/>

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1. Inspection of dwelling houses during the year:

(i)	(a)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health and Housing Acts)	103
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	..	..	..	281
(ii)	(a)	Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (i) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Consolidated) Regulations 1925	..	..	..	-
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	..	..	..	-
(iii)		Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation			..	-
(iv)		Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation		..	..	42

2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of Formal Notice:

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	41
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3. Action under Statutory Powers during this year:

A. Proceedings under Section 9, 10 and 12 of the Housing Act, 1957:

(i) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs -

(ii) Number of dwelling houses rendered fit after service of Formal Notices:

(a) By Owners -

(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners -

B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

(i) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which informal notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 42

(ii) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of Formal Notices:

(a) By Owners -

(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners -

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SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Food Poisoning Outbreaks -

One case of salmonella enteritis. The cause as one can expect in a single case could not be traced.

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1960.

<u>Disease</u>		<u>Total Cases.</u>	<u>Deaths.</u>
Scarlet Fever	..	32	-
Whooping Cough	..	57	-
Acute Poliomyelitis (Paralytic)		-	-
Measles	..	49	-
Diphtheria	..	-	-
Pneumonia	..	3	-
Dysentery	..	3	-
Encephalitis Lethargica	..	-	-
Typhoid and Paratyphoid	..	-	-
Erysipelas	..	-	-
Meningococcal Infection	..	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	..	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	..	-	-
Malaria	..	-	-
Undulant Fever	..	-	-
Cerebro Spinal Fever	..	-	-
Infective Hepatitis	..	2	-
Food Poisoning	..	1	-
Gastro Enteritis	..	-	-
Pneumococcal Meningitis	..	-	-

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<u>Age at 31st December:</u>	<u>Under 1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2-4</u>	<u>5-15</u>	<u>15 or over</u>	<u>Total</u>
Number vaccinated	318	14	10	7	4	353
Number re-vaccinated	-	-	1	15	32	48

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360

.. 98.1

Of the total number of vaccinations 401, 28 were carried out at County Council clinics.

A primary vaccination rate of 98.1 per 100 births is very satisfactory indeed, being considerably higher than my past experience when vaccination was compulsory.

I would emphasise that the ideal age for primary vaccination is under one year of age, when the risk of complications is practically nil. Complications do occur when the primary vaccination is done later in life, but not when re-vaccination takes place at an older age. Vaccination is compulsory for many people who wish to travel abroad or take up certain employment, and it is well worth while having all babies vaccinated so that no risk may be run if they have to be vaccinated in adult life.

$\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{3}$ $\frac{1}{4}$ $\frac{1}{5}$ $\frac{1}{6}$ $\frac{1}{7}$

Diphtheria Immunisation:

Number of children who completed a Full Course for Primary Immunisation in the Authority's Area (including temporary residents) in 1960:

Age at date of Final Injection.

<u>Under 5.</u>	<u>5 - 15.</u>
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384	7
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Total - 391

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Number of children who were given a secondary or reinforcing injection (i.e. subsequent to complete Full Course):

Total - 202

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Births for the same area	360
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Primary Immunisation Rate per 100 births	..	108.6
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The numbers shown above include 350 children who received combined Whooping Cough/Diphtheria immunisation injections.

Anti-Tetanus:

We are now using a combined vaccine giving protection against whooping cough, diphtheria and tetanus. Tetanus is a very, very rare disease but unfortunately it is almost essential for any doctor in hospital dealing with accident cases to give anti-tetanic serum, (not vaccine, it takes too long to act), in all cases where there are wounds. Now if this patient has had other sera the giving of anti-tetanic serum can cause very serious trouble, in fact it has caused death due to Anaphylaxis. Now if the patient has been immunised against tetanus by vaccine it is definitely unnecessary to give anti-tetanic serum but it is most important, therefore, that all patients who have had vaccination against tetanus should carry on them, at all times, the card showing when this was done. The patient may not be conscious when he arrives in hospital and cannot tell the doctor that he is immunised against tetanus and in any case his history is not always reliable. It has even been seriously suggested, and there is something in it, that all patients who have received tetanus vaccination should have the letter T tattooed on the buttock.

Whooping Cough:

On the 16th March, 1953, the County Council scheme under Section 26 of the National Health Service Act, 1946, was extended to cover protection against Whooping Cough.

It is obviously wise to immunise children as soon as possible, because by far the greatest danger occurs in the first year.

Number of children who completed a Full Course for Primary Immunisation in the Authority's Area (including temporary residents) in 1960:

Age at date of Final Injection.

<u>Under 5.</u>	<u>5 - 15.</u>
368	4
<u>Total</u>	- 372
	==

Number of children who were given a secondary or reinforcing injection:

<u>Total</u>	- 97
	==

Primary Immunisation Rate per 100 births: .. 103.3

These figures include 350 children who received a primary immunisation with a combined Whooping Cough/Diphtheria vaccine.

It will be noted that once again we have an immunisation rate both for Diphtheria and Whooping Cough of above 100%. It is emphasised that it is difficult to check that all the children who are immunised against Whooping Cough, Diphtheria, and Smallpox actually reside in Harpenden. You will appreciate that a Harpenden postal address by no means implies that the children actually reside within the Urban District boundary but I am sure the number of children in Harpenden who escape immunisation is very, very few.

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Programme of Protective Inoculations.

The following should be the routine procedure for young children:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Visit</u>	<u>Vaccine</u>	<u>Inj.</u>	<u>Interval</u>
2 - 6 months	1	Triple	1	
	2	(diphtheria, tetanus,	2	4 weeks or more
	3	pertussis)	3	4 weeks or more
	4	Smallpox	4	
7 -10 months	5	Poliomyelitis	5	4 weeks or more
	6		6	
15-18 months	7	Triple (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis)	7	Same visit
		Poliomyelitis	8	
		Diphtheria and tetanus	9	
School entry	8	Diphtheria and tetanus	9	
8 - 9 years	9	Diphtheria and tetanus	10	Same visit
		Smallpox (re-vaccination)		
10-15 years	10	B.C.G.	11	

Poliomyelitis Vaccine:

The only contra-indications considered to be valid at present are the same as those applying to the other types of immunising procedure, viz: acute or intercurrent illness, poor or indifferent general health, acute constitutional disturbances, etc. If a child is to have tonsils or adenoids removed and is also due for the vaccine, it should be given at least two weeks before the operation if possible in the hope that the child may develop some immunity.

4th Injection:

In April, 1961, the Ministry of Health announced on the wireless and in the Daily Papers, that it was advisable for all children, aged from 5 to 11 years, to have a 4th injection of poliomyelitis vaccine. No prior intimation was sent out to Health Authorities and the first day after the Minister's announcement we received many enquiries regarding this and had no official knowledge of it. Personally, I did not happen to hear the B.B.C. announcement on the 6 O'clock news, nor did I see the announcement in the papers until the afternoon.

A vaccine is being developed which is taken by mouth and is apparently very effective. It has been used on a very large scale in the United States of America and Russia and to a limited extent in this country but only so far where an epidemic of poliomyelitis has broken out. Work on this vaccine has been going on for several years but until recently we were doubtful whether the vaccine, after being swallowed, would not, through passage through the host's body, become virulent. Unlike the Salk vaccine it is a living vaccine but so attenuated that it does not produce actual cases of poliomyelitis.

The possibility of being able to combine poliomyelitis vaccine with the present triple vaccine against diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus is under careful consideration. The difficulty will probably be in timing; it is very essential that the whooping cough vaccine should be given as early as possible, best before the age of 3 months, but poliomyelitis vaccine is generally rather ineffective before the age of 6 months.

B.C.G. Vaccine:

If this vaccine is to be, or has been, given to a young child contact, there should be no immunising injections of any kind for two weeks before or for six weeks afterwards.

Tuberculosis:

Cases on Register as at 31st December, 1960.

<u>Pulmonary</u>		<u>Non-pulmonary</u>		<u>Totals.</u>
<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	
55 (52)	32 (34)	7 (5)	10 (14)	104 (105)

Figures as at 31st December, 1959, are in brackets.

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REPORT OF THE SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my eighth report on the work of the Public Health and Housing Department.

Housing problems always tend to come constantly to the fore whereas the routine public health duties go on from day to day without attracting so much attention. The value, however, of routine inspections, sampling, improvement of living and working conditions cannot be over-stressed and it is to these ends that much time and effort was devoted during the year under review. It is surprising that property owners have not taken more advantage of the facilities offered for obtaining improvement grants to bring their properties up to present day standards although it is pleasing to record that the Council have set a good example, as by the end of 1960 work was almost completed on the scheme to bring all pre-war Council houses up to improvement grant standard. The Council have continued their efforts to acquire as many properties as possible in the Heath Road area with a view to clearing the sub-standard houses and ultimate redevelopment.

The opening of the new open air swimming pool in Rothamsted Park has proved an invaluable asset to the district. The results of daily tests of the water and frequent check samples submitted to the Public Health Laboratory have been highly satisfactory, thereby indicating that the plant is adequate to maintain the water in a safe condition, even at times of heavy usage at weekends and public holidays.

I should like to express my appreciation to the Chairman and members of the Public Health and Housing Committees for the keen interest taken in the work of the Department and for their friendly and close support at all times.

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SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS.

General Sanitation :

Public Health Acts - primary inspections	..	223	
re-inspections	..	372	
Drainage	..	104	
Infectious Diseases	..	2	
Water Pollution	..	2	
Moveable Dwellings	..	38	
Refuse Collection and Disposal	..	11	
Disinfestations	..	8	
Public Conveniences	..	1	
Smell Nuisances	..	11	
Keeping of Animals	..	20	
Rodent Control	..	1,722	+
Housing Acts	..	196	
Rent Acts	..	36	
Factories Acts	..	139	
Smoke Nuisances	..	2	
Petroleum Regulations	..	81	
Miscellaneous Visits	..	268	
		<hr/>	
		3,236	
		<hr/>	
		<hr/>	

+ Includes 1,648 visits made by the
Council's Rodent Operative.

Food Hygiene :

General Stores and Grocers	..	59	
Cafes and Canteens	..	36	
Licensed Premises	..	14	
Bakers and Confectioners	..	12	
Greengrocers	..	7	
Butchers	..	30	
Fish Shops	..	7	
Dairies	..	5	
Ice Cream Premises	..	19	
Visits re sampling:			
Milk Distributors	..	23	
Ice Cream Premises	..	4	
		<hr/>	
		216	
		<hr/>	
		<hr/>	

GENERAL SANITATION.

Complaints:

During the year, 300 complaints were received and dealt with; 95 of these were regarding infestations by rats and mice; 157 were regarding one or more wasps' nests.

Drainage and Cesspools:

104 visits were made for the purpose of testing and checking existing drainage systems including cesspools. The arrangements whereby the St. Albans Rural District Council empty cesspools in the area were continued and during the year 55 emptyings were carried out. Difficulties do from time to time arise by the failure of property owners to give adequate notice that a cesspool will require emptying but nevertheless the co-operation received from Mr. D.J. Graham, Chief Public Health Inspector to the St. Albans Rural District Council has done much to alleviate these difficulties. The Council bear the cost of one emptying of a cesspool each year for premises not within the reach of the Council's sewers.

Factories Acts, 1937 and 1948:

The following tables show the prescribed particulars on the Administration of the Factories Acts:

Part I of the Act:

1. Inspections for the purposes of provisions as to health:

<u>Premises.</u>	<u>Number</u> <u>on</u> <u>Register.</u>	<u>Number</u> <u>Inspections.</u>	<u>of:</u> <u>Written</u> <u>Notices.</u>	<u>Occupiers</u> <u>prosecuted.</u>
Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, & 6 are to be enforced by the Local Authority:	4	5	Nil	Nil
Factories not included in above in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority:	58	76	5	Nil
Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding Outworkers' Premises):	53	58	Nil	Nil
	<u>115</u>	<u>139</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>Nil</u>

2. Cases in which defects were found:

<u>Particulars.</u>	<u>Number of cases in which defects were found.</u>		<u>Referred</u>		<u>Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.</u>
	<u>Found.</u>	<u>Remedied.</u>	<u>To H.M. Inspector.</u>	<u>By H.M. Inspector.</u>	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Overcrowding (S.2)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Unreasonable Temperature (S.3)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
(b) Unsuitable or defective	7	7	Nil	1	Nil
(c) Not separate for sexes	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outworkers)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
<u>Totals:</u>	7	7	Nil	1	Nil
	==	==	==	==	==

Part VIII of the Act:

Outwork - Section 110.

<u>Nature of Work.</u>	<u>No. of Outworkers in August list required by S.110 (1) (c) (2).</u>	<u>No. of cases of default in sending lists to Council.</u>	<u>No. of prosecu- tions for failure to supply lists.</u>
Wearing apparel. Making etc. Cleaning and Washing	12 +	Nil	Nil
All other types of outwork	Nil	Nil	Nil
	—	—	—
<u>Totals:</u>	12	Nil	Nil
	==	==	==

+ Five of these are employed by firms outside the district.

Outwork - Section 111.

<u>Nature of Work.</u>	<u>No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises.</u>	<u>Notices served.</u>	<u>Prosecutions.</u>
Wearing apparel. Making etc. Cleaning and Washing.	Nil	Nil	Nil
All other types of outwork	Nil	Nil	Nil
	—	—	—
<u>Totals:</u>	Nil	Nil	Nil
	==	==	==

Means of Escape in Case of Fire Certificates - Section 34:

As from 1st December, 1960, the duty of issuing certificates as to means of escape in case of fire in factories was transferred to the County Fire Authority. Up to this date such certificates were in force for all factories in the district requiring them and the necessary information was passed to the appropriate officials of the County Council.

Although in the past the advice of the County Fire Authority has been sought before issuing these certificates there are obvious advantages to be gained by their Officers being directly responsible for this function. Naturally it is always regrettable when any function is taken away from a District Council but this is clearly an instance where the advantages are indisputable.

Moveable Dwellings:

When the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act came into force in August, 1960, there were three private sites in use. Two of these had 12 caravans each and the third site 10 caravans. Licences under the new Act were subsequently issued with conditions incorporating all the main items of the model standards issued by the Minister of Housing and Local Government.

The three sites are maintained in a reasonable condition each having main water supply, flush toilets for both sexes supplemented by chemical closet disposal units. The demand for sites is by no means satisfied but nevertheless effective control has now been achieved.

Notices:

The following notices were served during the year. Compliance was effected without the need for instituting legal proceedings.

Informal Notices.

Notices served during year	..	42
Complied with by owners		
during year	..	41

Formal Notices.

Notices served during year	..	Nil
Complied with by owners		
during year	..	Nil

Rodent Control:

The extermination of rats and mice is carried out as a free service to the occupiers of private premises. A charge is made in respect of business premises at an hourly rate to cover the cost of labour, materials and administration.

95 complaints concerning infestations by rats and mice were received and dealt with and treatment was carried out at 329 properties. For this purpose 1722 visits were made and 260 dead rats were found.

The Council employ one Rodent Operative (Mr. E.A.C. Faram) for this work.

Sewers:

In accordance with the recommendations of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, a ten per cent test of sewer manholes was carried out during the year. 98 manholes were test baited and 3 manholes were found to be slightly infested. These were subsequently re-treated and found to be free.

Council Properties:

Careful supervision of the Council's Depots and Stores was maintained during the year and any infestation at the Sewage Works or Refuse Tip was dealt with by the Manager and Rodent Operative. Improvements in the method of operating the refuse tip have assisted considerably in checking rodent infestations.

Wasps' Nests:

157 complaints were received of wasps' nests and 171 nests were treated by the Rodent Operative.

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CONTROL OF FOOD AND FOOD PREMISES

Meat Supply and Slaughtering facilities:

No slaughterhouses have been used in the district since the war but adequate slaughtering facilities have been available in surrounding districts. The demand from local butchers for such facilities is, however, very limited indeed and most retailers seem now to rely on supplies of carcase meat from wholesale meat markets. A careful check has been kept on the vehicles used for transporting meat together with the protective clothing worn by the meat handlers.

Arrangements are still in force whereby assistance in meat inspection duties would be given to the St. Albans Rural District Council should the necessity arise at any time.

The following meat and meat products were condemned as being unfit for human consumption at premises in Harpenden during the year:

Beef	$26\frac{3}{4}$	lbs.
Mutton	$5\frac{1}{4}$	lbs.
Tinned Meat and Meat Products	$30\frac{3}{4}$	lbs.

Other Food Inspections:

The following foodstuffs were condemned as being unfit for human consumption, and disposal by incineration or burying on the refuse tip was arranged in every case:

Potatoes	288	lbs.
Tinned Fruit	30	lbs.
Tinned Vegetables	}	
Soups and Fish		
Tinned Milk and Cream	$30\frac{1}{2}$	lbs.
	3	tins.

The Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955:

During the year 206 visits were made to food premises in the area and inspections were carried out under the above Regulations. No certificates of exemption were issued and all improvements were secured without the need for formal action by the Council. The Regulations appear to have been accepted by food traders as being reasonable in their requirements and at the same time essential in any food business.

Food Premises:

There are 142 food premises in the area which are made up as follows:

General Stores and Grocers	38
Cafes and Canteens	25
Confectioners and Bakers	25
Greengrocers	9
Butchers	11
Licensed Premises	25
Chemists	6
Fish Shops	3

14 premises are registered for the manufacture and sale of sausages etc. and 30 visits were made to these premises. Conditions were found to be satisfactory.

Legal Proceedings:

In two instances legal proceedings were instituted under Section 2 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, where articles of food were sold to the prejudice of the purchaser, not of the substance demanded. The first case concerned a loaf of bread containing a cockroach; the second a loaf of bread containing a wasp and a flour beetle. Both defendants pleaded guilty and fines of £10 with £5:5s:0d. costs and £3 with £6:6s:0d. costs were imposed.

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Ice-cream:

There are in the district 48 premises registered for the sale and storage of ice-cream under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, and in each case the ice-cream is obtained from one of the well known large manufacturers. Practically all the ice-cream sold from these premises is pre-packed. No premises are registered for the manufacture of ice-cream.

A number of vehicles from which ice-cream is sold move into the district from neighbouring towns and the effective control of the sale of ice-cream from such vehicles is exceedingly difficult since they mainly operate at week-ends and holidays.

19 visits were made to premises registered for the storage and sale of ice-cream and 9 samples of ice-cream were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory at Luton for examination, the results being set out below:

<u>Type of Sample.</u>	<u>Grade.</u>				<u>Total.</u>
	<u>1.</u>	<u>2.</u>	<u>3.</u>	<u>4.</u>	
Pre-packed	8	-	-	-	8
Loose	1	-	-	-	<u>1</u>
					9
					<u> </u>

N.B. Samples in Grade 1 are considered satisfactory.

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Milk and Dairies Act, Order and Regulations:

There are in the district 14 registered distributors of milk and three registered dairies, although no milk is actually processed or bottled in Harpenden. Milk is supplied from three large plants in adjoining areas and all milk samples submitted for testing proved satisfactory. Only heat treated milk is now sold within the district.

The following licences were issued during the year:

Dealers' licences authorising the use of
the special designation.

Pasteurised	6.
Sterilised	6.
Tuberculin Tested	4.

Supplementary licences authorising the use
of the special designation.

Pasteurised	3.
Sterilised	2.
Tuberculin Tested	2.

Details of the milk samples are given below:

<u>Type of Milk</u>	<u>Number</u> <u>examined</u>	<u>Satis-</u> <u>factory</u>	<u>Unsatis-</u> <u>factory</u>
Sterilised	1	1	-
Pasteurised	42	42	-
T.T. (Pasteurised)	35	35	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	78	78	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

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The Council's programme for dealing with unfit houses was continued during the year when the tenants of four condemned properties were rehoused and two cottages were demolished. In the five year period since the programme was drawn up a total of 36 houses has been dealt with.

The policy of buying up properties in the Heath Road area was continued during the year and it is hoped that at least 21 of these houses which are in poor condition will shortly be emptied with a view to demolition as soon as possible.

A summary of the applications received for Certificates of Disrepair during 1960 is as follows :

<u>Applications received.</u>	<u>Notices by Local Authority to Landlords.</u>	<u>Applications refused.</u>	<u>Under-takings received.</u>	<u>Certificates of Disrepair issued.</u>
<u>Form I.</u>	<u>Form J.</u>		<u>Form K.</u>	<u>Form L.</u>
1	1	-	1	Nil

Since the Act came into force, only 25 tenants of rent controlled property have applied for certificates of disrepair and it would appear that landlords with the benefit of increased rents have been able to carry out essential repairs with the result that tenants generally have not needed to seek the assistance of the local authority. Two applications for revocation of Certificates issued under the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954 were received and subsequently granted.

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HOUSING MANAGEMENT

The Council now owns 661 houses, 190 flats, 24 old peoples dwellings and 25 prefabricated bungalows, making a total of 900 housing units.

During 1960, a further 10 new houses were completed and building commenced on 23 old peoples dwellings, 12 cottage flats and 6 houses.

The programme for bringing all pre-war houses up to modern standards was continued during the year and this involved the installation of 106 hot water systems and 222 washbasins together with other incidental works. Electricity was installed in 8 houses on the Longfield Road Estate.

Very careful consideration was given to the Councils future housing policy and after due consideration of a comprehensive report the following matters were agreed.

- (a) that the prefabricated bungalows should be removed in two stages and the site redeveloped by the construction of cottage flats.
- (b) that consideration should be given to the redevelopment of the Heath Road area with the possibility of constructing 3 or 4 storey blocks of flats with some old peoples dwellings.
- (c) that a start should be made to convert the 60 duplex flats into houses as and when suitable opportunities arise.

The following visits and inspections were made in the performance of duties connected with housing management :

To applicants	..	97
Maintenance	..	2,340
Administration	..	107
Tenancies	..	79

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Summary of Housing Applicants.

<u>Applicants.</u>	<u>Active List.</u>	<u>Deferred List.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Married couples with children.	79	30	109
Married couples and Engaged Couples.	64	41	105
Single Persons.	15	8	23
Old Persons.	82	-	82
	—	—	—
	240	79	319
	==	==	==

The total number of applicants for housing accommodation at the end of the year 319, compared with 289 at the end of 1959; 323 at the end of 1958; 319 at the end of 1957; and 303 at the end of 1956.

The number of housing applicants in urgent need of accommodation is very small indeed but nevertheless many people still look to the Council for accommodation in view of the ever rising prices of houses for purchase. Difficulties do still arise from time to time with persons affected by the provisions of the Rent Act and by the termination of tied tenancies. Within the limits of available accommodation, however, assistance was given to persons so affected whenever possible.

In view of the changing circumstances the Council decided to dispense with their points scheme for allocating houses and all new accommodation provided in 1961 will be allocated solely on account of an applicants "need of accommodation".

A further 19 houses were sold during 1960 and 9 exchanges were agreed including 4 with tenants of other local authorities. Although only 10 houses and 5 flats became vacant during the year 28 tenancies were arranged as a result, thereby indicating the efforts made to resettle tenants in accommodation more suitable for their particular needs.

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PETROLEUM REGULATIONS

The provisions of the Petroleum Acts and Regulations are administered by the Department. 30 occupiers of filling stations, repair garages and other premises are licensed to store petroleum spirit and 81 visits were made to such premises during the year.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

J. SNOWDON,

Senior Public Health
Inspector.

